

Geospatial Products and Services Contracts

CSC and CRSDC Replacement Contracts FAQ

- 1. What are the lessons learned from past projects – are there things you'd like to do differently and others you are pleased to do exactly the same?**

This question is too broad. Please ask about specific areas.

- 2. What success and failure did you have with LIDAR (Light Detection and Ranging)?**

We have completed several projects with LIDAR. Early projects had some growing pains as would be expected with any new technology. We believe that LIDAR technology has matured to the point where the risk of failure is no longer technology based.

- 3. What success/failure did you have with digital sensors?**

We have completed several projects with digital sensors. Early projects had some growing pains as would be expected with any new technology. We believe that digital sensor technology has matured to the point where the risk of failure is no longer technology based.

- 4. What rough percentage of the work was performed with digital sensors vs. film?**

The work percentage has changed during the life of CSC2 (Cartographic Services Contracts II) from mostly film to some digital projects. We have no readily available compiled data concerning this.

- 5. Under CSC2, how was the work divided among contracts - why were some folks given fewer tasks than others?**

CSC2 work has been and continues to be divided exactly as the original synopsis said it would be. "Contractors will be judged and ranked by virtue of their performance in terms of quality of deliverables, timeliness, and efficiency. After contract minimums are met, these rankings will influence the apportionment of future work."

Also, some companies have been more proactive in utilizing the following mechanism that was included in the contracts:

"Paragraph H.17 Ordering Procedures - Multiple Awards (Modified), Subparagraph 2(e) it states: Additionally, if the contractor collaborates with a Federal, State, or local government agency to develop a project that is within the scope of this contract, and that government agency has negotiated a cooperative agreement with the USGS, and that government agency requested USGS to apportion that work to that firm, a task order will be placed with that firm, providing that: 1) discussions between the government and the contractor lead to agreement on appropriate levels of effort, labor categories, etc., for individual projects, prior to awarding task orders; 2) the firm can accomplish the work without adversely impacting the firm's current commitments to this contract, and 3) that this process does not circumvent the government agency's laws or procurement rules and regulations."

6. Has there always been sufficient competition for each task, regardless of the nature and size of the task? Are there competencies for which you would have liked a greater choice of options in terms of contractors?

The CSC contracts are Architect and Engineering Services subject to Part 36 of the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) and specifically the Brooks Act. The task orders are not competed under this process. All firms were required to have the ability within their team to provide all of the services required. All of the firms selected for award had that ability. The second part of your question cannot be responded to as is - please explain it.

7. Under CSC2, what was the average pricing per square mile for high resolution aerials and LIDAR?

We have no readily compiled data available to give an average. Even if the data were available, there are too many variables at the project level for this to be a meaningful number.

8. Did you solicit bids from all contractors on all projects?

See question 6 above. For CSC2 we followed FAR part 36 procedures in both initial selection and in the apportionment of individual task orders. For individual task orders, we solicit a technical proposal from one firm, come to terms on technical details, ask for a price proposal, and then negotiate a FFP (Firm Fixed Price) for the task. If we are unable to come to terms on the technical details or the FFP, then we move to the next qualified contractor and begin again.

9. How are the contractors being rated at the end of contract (CSC2)? Which companies received the best reviews? Worst?

Past performance information is protected under the FAR Part 42 and specifically under 42.1503(b) "The completed evaluation shall not be released to other than Government personnel and the contractor whose performance is being evaluated ..." Our procedure is to evaluate performance at the end of an option or contract period according to the terms of their contract, and the task orders on which they have performed. Should any contractor be rated unsatisfactory they shall be given due process on any negative evaluation. No final ratings have been made because the contracts are not completed.

10. Did geographic location make a difference in the award – or was it mainly price (CSC2)?

Geographic location of assets is may be a factor in the determination of the vendor selected for a task simply because of its affect on pricing.

11. What were your technology problems - data transfer, formats, etc?

This question is too broad to give a meaningful answer. Please be specific.

12. Who are the main clients? State, Local, Fed?

Our clients are throughout all levels of the Federal, state, local, and tribal governments. There is no readily compiled list available of the clients.

13. Did you allow contractors to bring clients to you?

"Paragraph H.17 Ordering Procedures - Multiple Awards (Modified), Subparagraph 2(e) it states: Additionally, if the contractor collaborates with a Federal, State, or local government agency to develop a project that is within the scope of this contract, and that government agency has negotiated a cooperative agreement with the USGS, and that government agency requested USGS to apportion that work to that firm, a task order will be placed with that firm, providing that: 1) discussions between the government and the contractor lead to agreement on appropriate levels of effort, labor categories, etc., for individual projects, prior to awarding task orders; 2) the firm can accomplish the work without adversely impacting the firm's current commitments to this contract, and 3) that this process does not circumvent the government agency's laws or procurement rules and regulations."

14. How was funding generated for projects? Will this be changing?

Funding is determined and generated at the task order level. No changes are planned. Funding can come from any number of government sources for any particular project.

15. Who is on the selection committee and what will be the process for selection? Will there be a convening of a technical committee before the writing of the RFP (Request For Proposal) to which industry experts would be welcome (at their own cost) to address questions about the

appropriateness of the various technologies given the needs of the USGS?

The selection committee is internal government information and, therefore, is not disclosable. USGS will be determining its needs - there is sufficient in-house expertise to do so. The industry will be given an opportunity to comment on the solicitations when they are released. A website is being set up to provide for comments and suggestions for this concern. An email address is available now to all interested parties that have questions or comments. Please send email to gpssc@usgs.gov

16. What specific technologies will you be looking for – apart from the ones previously contracted for under this vehicle?

We are looking for technologies that will solve our and our customers' needs during the life of the contracts. The contracts will have a feature to enable any known or future developed technologies that meet our needs to be utilized in the performance of the work.

17. Will the complete set of qualifications for the contracting team be reviewed – or just those of the prime contractor?

Offerors will have to demonstrate competence in all areas of the solicitation and, if necessary, they should propose subcontractors to meet the requirements. The qualifications of their proposed team will be evaluated.

18. What tasks are on the horizon – any large projects being planned?

None are known at this time.

19. Will more subcontractors hurt or help on a submittal?

Offerors will have to demonstrate competence in all areas of the solicitation. There are no preestablished numbers for the evaluation.

20. Who can we contact in Denver to understand trends in contracting, areas of interest, and possible changes in the nature of the work that will be contracted?

The contracting officer. Please put all questions in writing and submit to gpsc@usgs.gov

21. How might this contract vehicle be affected by the A-76 Competitive Sourcing process? When is that process going to be concluded?

The technical management location could change, as well as the names of the people responsible for that management.

22. What advice do you have that might help us be awarded a contract?

Complete all the forms and submit all the requested information the first time. Do not include extraneous information; do not tell us what LIDAR etc., is - we already know. Should you have a new product you propose to use, we are interested. We are a customer service oriented agency. It is advisable to put your best proposal forward the first time and not rely on a lengthy discussion process.

There will be an "award without discussions" feature in the best value solicitation; if there are proposals that address all of our concerns, and the pricing is determined reasonable, we may not be holding discussions.

The government will evaluate the proposals in an impartial manner and award accordingly. Our evaluation criteria will be in the request for proposals. Your firm can decide at that time if you are interested in our work.

23. Will support for creating USGS web services be procured through this contract?

We don't understand this question. Please clarify.

24. Approximately how many contracts will be awarded?

The committee determining the government's needs has not yet decided this at this time. The approximate number of awards will be included in the solicitations.

25. What set-asides, small business requirements will there be? What are the USGS overall targets for these?

This is an issue still being decided by the committee. Any set-aside awards will be stated in the solicitation. The overall targets for USGS are at <http://www.usgs.gov/contracts/goals.html>.

26. Are there any key geographic locations that a contractor would suffer from not having represented on the team because of their importance to the USGS and the folks who utilize this vehicle?

This contract will be used to acquire services throughout the United States and its territories and possessions. All geographic areas are of equal importance to selection for contract award. Geographic location of assets is may be a factor in the determination of the vendor selected for a task simply because of its affect on pricing.

27. What will make you confident in our submittal that we are experts in our field? POC's? Statements? Previous projects with USGS? What types? State, local, Fed, classified?

The government looks at past performance on projects similar in size and type to what the requirements will be, preferably performed with other government entities (classified or not). Your proposed approach in meeting our scope of work, your proposed level of expertise, etc., will all be taken into consideration. Again, our evaluation criteria will be in the request for proposals.

The government will evaluate your proposal according to what you bring to the table against our scope of work and evaluation criteria. After this has been assessed, the government will then make decisions concerning awards in accordance with the pre-established impartial source selection plan.

28. Please explain the differences between A&E (Architect and Engineering) and Best Value contracts.

At this time USGS is contemplating awarding two types of IDIQ (Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantity) contracts to meet our upcoming needs. One set will be A&E contracts; the other set will be Best Value contracts.

A&E

The A&E solicitation process will begin by issuance of a public announcement. Offeror's will then submit their SF330 qualifications. These will be evaluated, and those found qualified will be sent the A&E solicitation. Proposals will be submitted (technical and price) and evaluations will be conducted in accordance with the solicitations evaluation criteria (FAR 36.602-1). Negotiations will take place with the best qualified and an award will be made in accordance with the pre-established impartial source selection plan.

After awards are made - a task order will be issued to the contractor determined to be best qualified for that work. Contractors will be judged and ranked by virtue of their performance in terms of quality of deliverables, timeliness, and efficiency. After contract minimums are met, these rankings will influence the apportionment of future work. Additionally, if the contractor collaborates with a Federal, State or local government agency to develop a project that is within the scope of this contract, and that government agency has negotiated a cooperative agreement with the USGS, and that government agency requests USGS to apportion that work to that firm, a task order will be placed with that firm, providing that: 1) discussions between the Government and the contractor lead to agreement on appropriate levels of effort, labor categories, etc., for individual projects, prior to awarding task orders; 2) the firm can accomplish the work without adversely impacting the firm's current commitments to this contract; and 3) that this process

does not circumvent the government agency's laws or procurement rules and regulations.

Best Value

The best value solicitation process also will begin by issuance of a public announcement. Offerors will submit their proposals (technical and price); these will be evaluated and a competitive range will be established in accordance with the pre-established impartial source selection plan. Contracts will be negotiated with, or awarded without discussions to, those offerors whose proposals are determined to represent the best value to the government.

After contract award, task orders will be posted to a website. Those firms who have received contract awards will obtain task orders and submit competitive proposals. Proposals will be evaluated using established evaluation criteria, and the best value will be determined and awarded.

29. We noticed NAPP (National Aerial Photography Program) projects under the past tasking. Will NAIP (National Agricultural Imagery Program) projects be done under this one (through interagency agreements with USDA-USGS)?

USDA has a full suite of contracts. If any of our customers require NAIP-like products, and those requirements could not be met by APFO for some reason, then those products may be acquired through these contracts.

30. Will the RFP (Request for Proposal) for the Replacement Contract be announced at the end of November?

The item that will come out approximately the end of November will be what we commonly call the "CBD Synopsis". This will be the announcement that asks interested firms to submit qualification statements in the form of the old 254's and 255's or in the newer replacement form, SF330.

31. Will a draft RFP be made available?

At this time there are no plans to publish a draft RFP. We have used draft RFP's in the past when we were starting up new acquisition programs but since this is the third generation of this program, I don't see that a draft would bring outstanding value to the process.